



## THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO **MANAGER'S REPORT**

DATE ISSUED: July 25, 2002 REPORT NO. 02-177

ATTENTION: Honorable Members of the Land Use and Housing Committee  
Agenda of July 31, 2002

SUBJECT: Adoption of the 2001 California Building Codes and Fire Code

### SUMMARY

Issue: Should the City Council adopt an ordinance amending the Municipal Code to incorporate the current editions of the California Building, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Codes as well as the California Fire Code with related amendments?

Manager's Recommendation - Adopt the ordinance.

Land Use & Housing Committee Recommendation -

Other Recommendations - The following organizations were notified seeking their support for adoption of the updated Building codes and the Fire Code and the associated amendments:

San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects  
San Diego Chapter of the American Soc. Of Civil Eng.  
Structural Engineers Association of San Diego  
Associated General Contractors of America  
Associated Builders & Contractors  
Building Industry Association of San Diego County  
San Diego Association of Geologists c/o Kleinfelder, Inc.  
David Thompson, Architects Bundy and Thompson

The Board of Building Appeals and Advisors approved the amendment package with some minor modifications at their July 11, 2002 meeting and recommended that the Land Use and Housing Committee adopt the proposed codes and approve the proposed

amendments to the San Diego Municipal Code as revised.

Fiscal Impact - Administration of the Building and Fire codes is based upon a fee for service paid for by applicants in the development process.

## BACKGROUND

Every three years the City of San Diego adopts the latest editions of the California Building Codes and Fire Code. This is done in coordination with the State of California's adoption of these codes. This procedure provides an additional opportunity to modify local regulations and maintain local and state wide consistency.

The City's building and fire safety laws are incorporated in the San Diego Municipal Code as shown below:

1. Chapter 5 Article 5 contains the Fire Code.
2. Chapter 11 Article 1 includes the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors regulations.
3. Chapter 11 Article 2 Division 2 includes procedures for unsafe buildings.
4. Chapter 12 Article 9 Division 1 outlines general construction permit authority and procedures.
5. Chapter 12 Article 9 Division 2 and Chapter 14 Article 5 contain building permit procedures and the building code amendments.
6. Chapter 12 Article 9 Division 3 and Chapter 14 Article 6 contain electrical permit procedures and the electrical code amendments.
7. Chapter 12 Article 9 Division 4 and Chapter 14 Article 7 contain plumbing and mechanical code permit procedures and the plumbing and mechanical code amendments.

This ordinance amends these San Diego Municipal Code Chapters and Articles so as to:

1. Adopt the 2001 Edition of the California Building Code (1997 UBC with state amendments);
2. Adopt the 2001 Edition of the California Electrical Code (1999 NEC with state amendments);

3. Adopt the 2001 Edition of the California Plumbing Code (2000 UPC by IAPMO with state amendments);
4. Adopt the 2001 Edition of the California Mechanical Code (2000 UMC by IAPMO with state amendments); and
5. Adopt the 2001 Edition of the California Fire Code (2000 UFC by Western Fire Chiefs' Association with State amendments).

Explanations of the proposed amendments to the Municipal Code that are of significance are attached. The proposed changes to the San Diego Municipal Code are primarily editorial in nature and include no new substantive regulations and eliminate redundant language. In some instances regulations have been reduced.

As stated above, these editions are the most recent versions of the California Building and Fire Codes. Adoption of this ordinance will update the City's building standards for all types of buildings to reflect the most recent improvements in design and construction techniques.

The State of California has adopted these same editions of the Model Building and Fire Codes. State law requires that, except for local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions, all jurisdictions adopt and enforce the same regulations which are adopted by the State. As a result, all cities in the San Diego metropolitan area and the County are in the process of adopting the same editions with a minimum of local amendments. As such, this will result in substantial uniformity with the County and all other local jurisdictions within San Diego county, and the State of California.

Copies of the amendments to the Municipal code incorporated in this ordinance have been distributed to the principal building industry organizations in the county (list attached). Public hearings were also held by the Building Board of Appeals and Advisors to review the proposed amendments. The Board voted to recommend to the City Council adoption of the 2001 California Building codes and Fire Code with changes to the Municipal Code as proposed in this ordinance.

The State of California has mandated an effective date of November 1, 2002 for the City to comply with this action. If not, this will require the City to implement the new Building codes and Fire Code regardless of the Council's action on the local amendments. Approval of these amendments in coordination with the State mandate will improve the City's administration and implementation of these codes.

## ALTERNATIVE

Do not recommend adoption of this ordinance. This will result in enforcement of State regulations without local amendments in connection with all building construction.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tina P. Christiansen, A.I.A.  
Development Services Director

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Jeff Bowman  
Fire Chief

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Approved: P. Lamont Ewell  
Assistant City Manager

## FATTAH

### Attachments -

1. Amendment package of the 2001 California Building Code and Municipal Code
2. Amendment package of the 2001 California Fire Code and Municipal Code
3. Amendment package of the 2001 California Plumbing and Mechanical Code and Municipal Code
4. Amendment package of the 2001 California Electrical Code and Municipal Code
5. Significant changes with explanations.
6. Code change monograph (updated)
7. SDMC Amendments necessary to adopt the 2001 California Fire Code